Hastings, Fred C [Editor, Downtowner?] Dec. 1920

(078)

V. G. LEWIS, B.A.,
PRESIDENT

COLLEGE 5036

COLLIER C. GRANT, B.A.,
GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER

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Students Administrative Council
University of Toronto.

February 10, 1920.

Sir Robert Falconer,
President,
University of Toronto,
Toronto.

Dear Mr. President:

I understand that each year you are accustomed to write an address to the members of the graduating class of the University of Toronto for publication in TORONTONENSIS. The Editorial Board of TORONTONENSIS wishes to record in the publication for this year the sentiment of reconstruction. We would be grateful therefore if you would write an address embodying this idea and containing about 650 words for TORONTONENSIS, 1920.

If convenient I would appreciate it if your article could be in by February 20th.

Thanking you in anticipation, I am,

Yours respectfully,

Fred. C. Hastings
Editor

TORONTONENSIS

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February 14th, 1920

F. C. Hastings, Esq.,
Editor, "Torontonensis",
University of Toronto.

Dear Mr. Hastings:

I enclose the article for the members of the graduating class of the University for publication in "Torontonensis".

Yours sincerely,

President.

These who leave the University of Toronto at the close of the current academic year will face a world which is laboriously and painfully adjusting itself to the terrible confusion into which it was thrown by the practically universal war. In the past wars have been more or less local. The recent war left no portion of the earth untouched, but undoubtedly there was a magnificent display of self-sacrifice much of which is imperishable. We assumed too easily that a new spirit would be created by the war with permanent effects for good in the life of the world. We find, however, that evil also has been let loose. Parts of Europe are in a condition of indescribable suffering; hatred is ablaze. The nations seem to be each so aggressive on its own behalf that statesmen are warning the world that the situation cannot be remedied unless they cease to live to themselves alone and work for the common good.

What is true of reconstruction in the larger international field is true also in domestic affairs. Unfortunately none men and women have forgotten that there was suffering in the past, and they ignore the present, going to shameless excesses. If wantonness continues to run riot sections of the people will be goaded into fury. What can graduates of the University do for reconstruction ? The primary essential is that they should adopt for themselves the principles laid down by the European statesmen for the nations, not to live solitary and apart but to devote themselves to the common good. Our social troubles will not be solved finally by legislation. Legislation must be directed and organised by wise, broad-minded and sympathetic men and women. What we most need for reconstruction is a widespread, intelligent and kindly interest in others. If this spirit can spread over the country the result will be as when a spring-wind sweeps over the dull ground of winter; the dull and soggy earth would be clad with verdure and flowers begin to smile.

If the academic person is to be successful in reconstruction he cannot approach the world with his pet theories

and nostrums. He must have learned first to observe the facts faithfully. Moreover the world does not believe too much in academic people. It is suspicious of "high-brows" - but it is never long suspicious of kindly wisdom. Now wisdom is acquired slowly. It is the fruit of experience, yet experience often does not bring it. But surely the university training has given suggestions as to the age long methods by which wisdom comes. One function of education is to produce the understanding mind, and wisdom follows on understanding.

Those who hold an academic degree should have learned something of the necessity of weighing the facts before coming to a judgment, realising that there are two sides to a question, and should have some understanding of the obligation that rests upon members of society who have been benefited at the public expense to fulfil their duty in part by giving self-sacrificing service for the good of the community. If these principles and convictions take hold upon our graduates they will soon become beneficent agents in Human Reconstruction.

My best wishes go with the graduating years for the highest and most enduring success.

President.

February 14th, 1920.

V. G. LEWIS, B.A.,
PRESIDENT

COLLEGE 5036

COLLIER C. GRANT, B.A.,
GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER

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Students Administrative Council
University of Toronto.

February 17, 1920.

Sir Robert Falconer,
President,
University of Toronto,
Toronto.

Dear Mr. President:

I have received your article for the members of the graduating class of the University for publication in TORONTONENSIS and wish to thank you for same.

I have just finished reading your article and I am sure that the spirit of it will be appreciated by the members of the graduating class of 1920.

Yours sincerely,

Fred. G. Hastings.
Editor

TORONTONENSIS

H/P

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